



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **OUTSTANDING FAIRS HONORED AT 97<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION**

**NASHVILLE** – Fairs across Tennessee are celebrating the awards they have earned for showcasing agriculture in communities large and small.

“Fairs highlight the best that our farms, farmers, and communities offer in the state,” Commissioner of Agriculture Charlie Hatcher, D.V.M. said. “Agriculture education is so important, especially in a time when fewer people are directly connected with farming and the sources of wholesome food and fiber.”

Approximately 850 people attended the Fairs Merit Awards recognition dinner program during the 97th Annual Convention of the Tennessee Association of Fairs (TAF) held Jan. 17-21, 2019, in Nashville.

The top award went to the Warren County Fair, which was named the Champion of Champions Fair for 2018. The Champion of Champions is selected from the 2017 Division Winners. The Warren County Fair was also among the 53 fairs recognized with the Award of Merit based on agriculture, educational value, overall operations, and the promotion of local interest and community spirit.

Phil Booher, manager of the Appalachian Fair in Gray, Tenn., will serve as 2019 President for TAF.

“The fairs of Tennessee wouldn’t be possible without the thousands of volunteers who give so much of their time and efforts,” Booher said. “I’m proud to be in their ranks, and to now serve as President.”

The winners of the primary 2018 fair categories include:

### **Division A**

State Champion:	Fentress County Fair
1st Runner-up:	Overton County Fair
2nd Runner-up:	Morgan County Fair
Most Improved:	Houston County Fair

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## ***Outstanding Fairs***

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### **Division AA**

State Champion: Dickson County Fair  
1st Runner-up: Lincoln County Fair  
2nd Runner-up: Lauderdale County Fair  
Most Improved: Franklin County Fair

### **Division AAA**

State Champion: Sevier County Fair  
1st Runner-up: Putnam County Fair  
2nd Runner-up: Williamson County Fair  
Most Improved: Coffee County Fair

### **Premiere Awards (selected from among previous winners)**

Champion of Champion: Rhea County Fair  
Division AA: Trousdale County Fair  
Division AAA: Wilson County Fair

In the regional division, the Appalachian Fair and the Tennessee Valley Fair received the Award of Merit. In the state division, the Tennessee State Fair received the Award of Merit based on overall fair operations. Other 2018 honorees include Judy Woodard of the Trousdale County Fair, who received the Judy Basse Memorial Award for outstanding fair secretary, and Clara Terry of the Scott County Fair, who received the Thornton Taylor Award for outstanding dedication to the fair programs in Tennessee.

The statewide Fair Showcase offered prize money and awards in 36 categories including best fair catalog, website and educational displays, promotional videos, posters, scrapbooks, creative ideas, and free-standing and table-top exhibits. In its 21<sup>st</sup> year, the competition drew 504 entries from 38 fairs. To see a list of these winners and other fair information, please visit <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/farms/fairs.html> or [www.tnfairs.com](http://www.tnfairs.com). In 2018, almost three million visitors attended county, regional, and state fairs in Tennessee, which generated \$12 million in gross receipts. More than 19,000 volunteers devoted valuable time and resources to the events featuring more than 200,000 agricultural exhibits. Some 26,000 exhibitors showcased livestock, farm crops, and other agricultural assets.

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